

BENEFITS NEWS

An Information Publication for State of California Employees

CHANGES IN THE WORKPLACE CAN LEAD TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Not so long ago, the topics of conversation around the water cooler included home improvement projects and new car or boat purchases. Nowadays, conversations focus on trimming personal and business expenses, putting off big purchases, and increased workload due to downsizing. As the old saying goes, "The times, they are a changing."

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can make coping with change a bit easier. And it's certainly true that many of us working in State service face some changes. They may include an unplanned job loss or transition, a change in supervisors or management, or the departure of a great co-worker. Whatever the change, it doesn't mean the end of the world. Instead, these changes can often open doors to new opportunities.

For example, being reassigned to a new position can be challenging, exciting, maybe even a little scary. You'll get unfamiliar assignments and work with people you aren't used to. But, if you look at it from a positive perspective, it may allow you to gain new skills and expand your network of co-workers and friends, which can advance your career.

Here's another example. Your boss has added more assignments to your already-full "to do" list. First, take comfort in knowing you're not alone; we're all being asked to do more with less. Then, spend a few minutes each day to

prioritize your assignments so you can handle the most critical items first. Meet with your supervisor if you need help prioritizing. You may find that your new assignments tap additional skills, which you can highlight on your resume when you apply for your next promotion.

Sometimes change is more dramatic, such as a layoff. If you find yourself needing to look for a new job, think of it as a time to reflect on what you really want to do for the rest of your life. You may want to look at other career choices, or perhaps you've always wanted to move to a different town and just never had the opportunity. On the other hand, you may want to use your current skills and network of friends and business associates to find another job right away.

Whatever your situation, coping with change will be easier if you focus on positive outcomes you can work toward.

EAP can help you understand how change affects us and how to cope with new situations. So, if you're feeling a little anxious these days and aren't sure what to do or where to turn, consider using your EAP benefits to help you through the transition. The information below describes EAP's online assistance and individual counseling services.



Online Assistance: www.dpa.ca.gov

(click on Benefits > Employee Assistance Program > Magellan Assist)

- Available to California State employees and eligible dependents with individual and family counseling needs.
- Online service is provided by Magellan Assist.
- Web site includes links to layoff-related articles under Health & Wellness/Workplace:
 - ❖ Getting back on track after layoff
 - ❖ Dealing with downsizing
 - ❖ Managing job-loss grief
 - ❖ Change
- Upon reaching the site (www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/other/eap/Assist.shtm), select "New User," then type in the EAP toll-free number (800-632-7422). From this window, either register by following the directions provided, or access the site as an unregistered guest by selecting "Continue Unregistered."

Individual Counseling Services: 1-800-632-7422

- Counseling services for State employees are provided by Merit Behavioral Care of California, under contract with the State of California.
- Counselors include licensed psychologists, clinical social workers, alcohol and drug counselors, and marriage and family therapists.
- Sessions are confidential.
- Access to services is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- If you're in Bargaining Unit 1, 3, 4, 11, 15, 20, or 21, or you're an excluded employee, you're entitled to an automatic six-month extension of your EAP benefit if you're laid off. During this period, you may use any unused sessions up to your allotted number of visits. (For details on the number of visits covered by this benefit, check page 9 of the EAP brochure or DPA's Web site: click on Benefits, then Employee Assistance Program.)
- If you're not in one of the units listed above and are facing layoff, you still may use EAP services. If you open a case (for a specific issue) prior to leaving State service, you can continue to receive EAP services for that specific issue, up to your allotted number of visits.

If you have questions about EAP services, please contact your departmental EAP Coordinator or call Merit Behavioral Care directly at 1-800-632-7422.

**For More Information
Contact**

Benefits Division

(916) 322-0300
CALNET 492-0300

ARAG Group

Group Legal Services Plan
1-800-247-4184

Dental Program

(916) 324-0525
CALNET 454-0525

Employee Assistance Program

MBC (Merit Behavioral Care)
1-800-632-7422

FlexElect Program

(916) 327-6429
CALNET 467-6429

Health Promotion Program

(916) 324-9398
CALNET 454-9398

Merit Award Board

(916) 324-0522
CALNET 454-0522

Savings Plus Program

1-866-566-4777
SPPFORU.COM

Contact Us Tab

Vision Service Plan

1-800-622-7444 or
(916) 851-5000

Workers' Comp. Program

(916) 445-9792
CALNET 485-9792

Fax Numbers

Benefits Division

(916) 322-3769
CALNET 492-3769

Savings Plus Program

(916) 327-1885
CALNET 467-1885

TDD (Any unit in DPA)

(916) 327-4266
CALNET 467-4266

Internet Address

www.dpa.ca.gov